

The Silk Road to Success

QV Silks is bringing a touch of the exotic to Somerset. The new business specialises in vibrant hand-painted designs on silk scarves, screens, paintings and bed covers. QV Silks' founders, designer Jill Blackie from Wellington, and Spaxton-based water-colourist Jan Golden, teamed their artistic talents after meeting at a local horticultural college.

'We're inspired by a mutual of love exotic flowers, wildlife, art deco and Japanese woodcuts.' said Jill. 'I'd never collaborated artistically with anyone before, and silk painting is an intense and unforgiving medium in which to work.'

'We work together on a piece, often with paintbrushes in both hands,' Jan laughed, adding, 'that's part of our success - we're too busy painting to fall out!'

However, producing finished colourfast silks is a labour of love taking days to complete. 'You have to be passionate about your designs and silk to persevere,' Jill explained. They have just launched a website,

www.qvsilks.com, which is doing brisk business with local companies interested in commissioning designs, and a London-based fashion designer is considering using the original, vibrant designs in her new range.

If you're looking for a unique Christmas gift, visit QV Silks at Hestercombe Gardens Christmas Fayre on Saturday 12 November, 10am – 5pm (admission £2), view their work at The Home Gallery in Martock from 1 – 17 November, or catch their counter display at the Tourist Information Centre at Taunton Library during November and December.

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Notes to Editor: Photo attached; file name: QVSilks_Peppermill_02:

Caption: QV Silks' Jill Blackie (pictured left) and Jan Golden getting ahead!

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